



Title of Report:	Mid-Year Performance Update - Improvement Objectives 2023/24
Committee Report Submitted To:	Corporate Policy & Resources
Date of Meeting:	28 November 2023
For Decision or For Information	For Information
To be discussed In Committee	NO

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
Strategic Theme	Improvement & Innovation
Outcome	Council maintains its performance as the most efficient of NI's local authorities
Lead Officer	Head of Performance

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES
Capital/Revenue	
Code	
Staffing Costs	

Legal Considerations	
Input of Legal Services Required	NO
Legal Opinion Obtained	NO

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

Assessment (DPIA)	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
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1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to Members, for information, an update on the performance against the outcomes and outputs set within the 2023/24 Performance Improvement Objectives.

2.0 Background (to include any previous decisions of Council)

2.1 These five Performance Improvement Objectives for 2023/24 were agreed by Council in September 2023 and form part of Council's Performance Improvement Plan for 2023/24.

2.2 Council is committed to regular reporting on Objectives such as these, and furthermore a year-end report will be provided for Council in June 2024.

3.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee notes the content of this update report attached at Appendix 1.

Performance Improvement Plan 2023/24 - Improvement Objectives – Update mid-year November 2023

2023/24 Performance Improvement Objective 1

Through our Leisure provision, we will return to, and improve upon, pre-pandemic levels of participant usage, income generation and leisure membership

Mid-year update November 2023

Outcomes and Outputs

How is Council performing in relation to the planned outcomes and outputs for this Improvement Objective?

Council is performing well in relation to the planned outcomes and outputs listed up to period 6. In real terms the service has fully recovered to exceed pre-pandemic levels, with much of the focus now on 'Service Transformation' and continuous service improvement. As mentioned in previous reports the trajectory of improvement during 2022/23 was going to continue to be realised into 2023/24. Also, the introduction of the 'Household' Membership has ensured that more participation opportunities exist for citizens of the Borough. Other key outcomes have benefitted from this Membership type, with income and Social Value increasing.

Sport & Wellbeing have also presented two Outline Business Cases to Council for investment in Gym Equipment. These Business Cases have been adopted, with installation of equipment nearing completion. The equipment upgrades represents a £600k investment by Council.

Risks

What risks have been identified, and if required, what mitigations have been put in place?

The risks identified which may prohibit delivery, range from ensuring Council retain the key trained and capable staff to deliver the plan, to the project risks relevant to the Gym Upgrades.

Managers continue to work proactively with Human Resources to implement the out workings of the Sport & Wellbeing Harmonisation of Terms & Conditions exercise. This will allow the population of the departmental structure. The service also continues to offer industry entry level courses in National Pool Lifeguarding, Fitness Instructing and Swimming Teacher Qualifications. The role of Commercial Manager is currently 'gapped', which presents a risk of loss of emphasis on achieving sales targets or achieving key promotions timeframes. This may not have impacted the service to the level expected as some of the work has been picked up by the extended Management Team, plus the Gym Upgrades would be expected to deliver increased sales as standard.

Once the investment in equipment was deemed affordable within Council's Capital Programme, associated procurement processes and project plans were implemented. Those implementation plans needed to ensure service disruption was minimal and as such temporary gym facilities were created in the Centre's Sports Halls. The gym projects have all been delivered to an extremely high standard and customer feedback has been extremely positive.

Service Level Delivery

What are the ongoing arrangements for delivery of this Improvement Objective?

Who is involved in this work and what are the ongoing staffing and time resources?

Please attach any agreed work plans or project documents for this Objective?

The arrangements for delivery of the plan have been in process for a number of years, the original plan was temporarily stalled by the pandemic. From the inception of LGR, the Sport & Wellbeing department has endeavoured to transform and continually improve the Service area. This work included insourcing of Gym operations, and updating, aligning and implementing a Leisure Software Package across the service. Further evidence of Inhouse transformation was completed in March 2020 with presentation to Council of the Strategic Vision for Leisure in the form of a 'Detailed Submission for the Provision of Leisure Services 2020 – 2030'. The submission includes a mobilisation plan to deliver the outcomes included within.

The key outcomes included within the Sport & Wellbeing Business Plan, and the Outline Business Cases for Gym Equipment also sit within the Strategic document produced in 2020.

The Service has maximised the reporting functions within the Leisure Management Software to develop Key Performance Templates which are service and site specific. The Key Performance Templates are available to the Management Team and discussed at regular monthly meetings. As the templates are also site specific, Centre Managers can share individual sites performance with their management teams.

Reporting

How often is progress reported to senior Service staff and SLT?

What plans are in place for ongoing reporting?

The Key Performance Templates mentioned above are updated on a monthly basis and are available to be communicated to the wider staff team. At the monthly Sport and Wellbeing Leisure Operations meetings the outcomes are discussed and reviewed. The departments Head of Service attends these meetings and will then provide verbal updates to the Director of Leisure & Development.

The outcomes are included within the Sport & Wellbeing Business Plans, so 6 month and annual updates will be provided and reported to Council.

Likewise, the outcomes are also included in the Outline Business Cases for Equipment for the Gyms, so the success or otherwise of these will be reported to Council via the Post Project Evaluation mechanism.

Budget

Is there a specific budget in place for this work, and if so, how is that being managed?

The budget for this work is included in the revenue facility budget for the 6 main leisure facilities within the Borough, those sites associated with the 'Detailed Submission for Provision of Leisure Services 2020 – 2030'. These budgets are managed by the General Manager for the Service, supported by the Centre's Leisure Operations Managers.

2023/24 Performance Improvement Objective 1

Through our Leisure provision, we will return to, and improve upon, pre-pandemic levels of participant usage, income generation and leisure membership

Outputs – The things we will do in 2023/24

- We will invest in upgrades of our leisure and gym equipment across all sites
- Gym & Equipment offering upgrades are now complete for Coleraine LC, Joey Dunlop LC and Sheskburn RC. The final phase of equipment replacement in RVLC will be completed in November 2023. All projects represent a total investment by Council of £600k.

- Deliver an enhanced centre membership campaign with at least 4 special promotions during the year.
 - 3 Special Promotions year to date including; 'Refer a Friend', 'Summer Campaign 4 months for the price of 3', and awareness campaigns for 'Thrive Household Membership.'
- Increase number of "live" and "Thrive Household" leisure members.
 - Number of 'Live' Membership (active direct debits) increased from 3,182 in October 2022 to 3,674 in October 2023.
 - Number of 'Live' Household Membership increased from 212 in October 2022 to 939 in October 2023.
- Implement agreed price increases, membership alignment and further integration of the 'Thrive' Household Membership to increase revenue.
 - Implemented Council agreed Price increase of 10% at rate setting.
 - 'Thrive Household Membership' continuing to grow in uptake as outlined above.
- Survey of satisfaction for customers
 - Customers satisfaction surveys, Service Standards and Customer Complaints procedure to be developed in Q3 & Q4.

Outcomes (The measurable differences we will make in 2023/24)

- Increase revenue to beyond pre pandemic levels of £2,184,251, and indeed raise revenue by 20% from £2,072,937 in 2022/23 to £2,429,966 in 2023/24.
 - Pre Pandemic Income = £2,184,251
 - 2022/23 Income = £2,072,937
 - Period 6 2023/24 = £1,354,570
 - 2023/24 Target = £2,429,966
- Increase leisure provision utilisation levels to pre pandemic levels of 642,127, and indeed increase utilisation levels from 730,524 in 2022/23 to an improved high of 804,000 in 2023/24.
 - Pre Pandemic Utilisation = 642,127
 - 2022/23 Utilisation = 730,524
 - Period 6 2023/24 = 349,597
 - 2023/24 Target = 804,000
- Increase social value by 10% from £2,923,952 in 2022/23 to £3,216,347 in 2023/24 (UK Active Social Value Report)
 - 2021/22 Social Value = £1,935,721
 - 2022/23 Social Value = £2,923,952
 - Period 6 2023/24 Social Value = £3,280,846
 - 2023/24 Social Value Target = £3,216,347
- Increase 'Thrive' Household Membership, from 785 to 980 households by the end of 2023/24
 - Thrive Household Memberships October 2022 = 212

- Thrive Household Memberships March 2023 = 785

- Thrive Household Memberships October 2023 = 939

- Increase 'Live' Memberships from 2,893 in 2021/22 and 3,898 in 2022/23 to an improved high of 4,287 in 2023/24

- April 2022 'Live' Direct Debits = 2,893

- October 2022 'Live Direct Debits = 3,182

- April 2023 'Live' Direct Debits = 3,898

- October 2023 'Live' Direct Debits = 3,674

Due to the introduction of the Household Membership, now representing 939, of the above collection counts, the service has benefited to an associated total membership count of April 22 (3,567), October 2022 (4,032), April 23 (6,120) and October 23 (6,867).

Furthermore, the income generated across the membership base has increased due to a continual rise in the average cost per direct debit of April 22 (£24.88), October 22 (£24.78), April 23 (£28.55) and October 23 (£29.94)

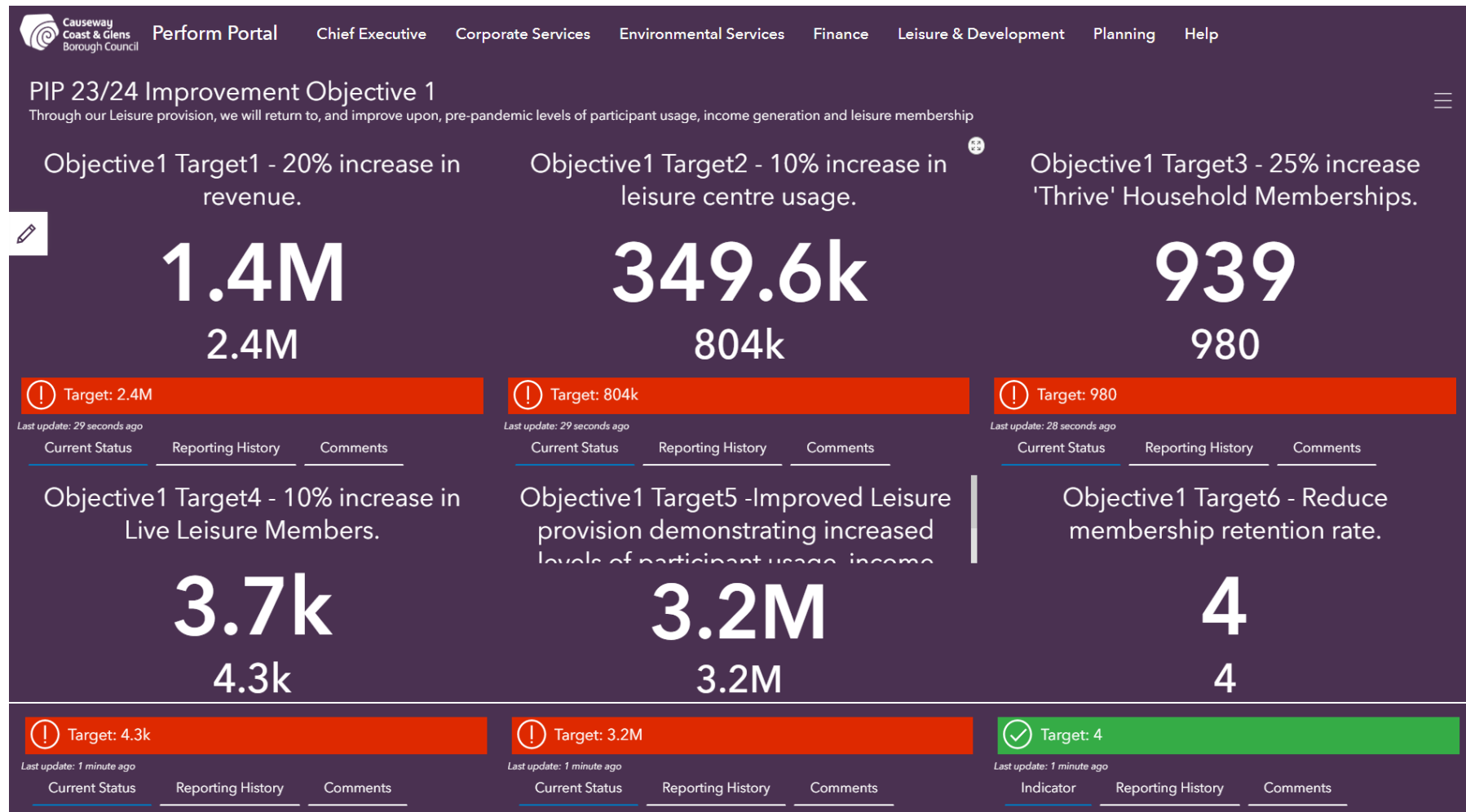
- Improve membership attrition rate from to 8% in 2022 and 6% in 2023, to 4% by the end of 2023/24

Current year to date attrition rate is 4%.

- Improve Customer Satisfaction rates.

- *Customer Survey planned or Quarter 4 2024.*

(note that all PERFORM dashboards reflect performance against annual targets)



2023/24 Performance Improvement Objective 2

We will further develop and embed improvements to Council's Performance Improvement and Business Planning processes

Mid-Year Update November 2023

Outcomes and Outputs

How is Council performing in relation to the planned outcomes and outputs for this Improvement Objective?

All Service's submitted timely and well structured Business Plans to their committees. Only slight delays was due to recess for Local Government elections.

Business Plans include strong elements of planned outcomes and SMART targets.

Plans are well advanced currently for delivering mid-year updates to their Committees in November and December 2023.

Large submission of data for APSE benchmarking first batch of data. This was completed in July 2023. Work is underway for the mop up second batch data submission in December 2023.

PERFORM module updated for Performance Improvement Plan 2023/24 in advance of PIP updates to Committee in November 2023.

Risks

What risks have been identified, and if required, what mitigations have been put in place?

The Business Plan modules in Perform need to be upscaled. Planning is under way for this.

There was a risk of slight delay due to the local government elections but this had a minimal impact.

Service Level Delivery

What are the ongoing arrangements for delivery of this Improvement Objective?
Who is involved in this work and what are the ongoing staffing and time resources?
Please attach any agreed work plans or project documents for this Objective?

Performance Team leads on this Objective, with weekly update meetings with Chief Executive. This Objective is built into the time resource for the Performance Team.

Key to success here is the relationships across Council with Heads of Service, and a reliance on them pushing forward with their Business Plans.

In terms of the APSE benchmarking data submissions, this is overseen by the Performance Team but the services themselves are responsible for collating and uploading the data.

2023/24 Business Plan for Performance Team is attached below and sets out plans for some of this work.

Reporting

How often is progress reported to senior Service staff and SLT?
What plans are in place for ongoing reporting?

Progress here reported at weekly meetings with Chief Executive and then at the November CPR Committee session as part of the overall Performance Improvement Plan 2023/24 mid-year update

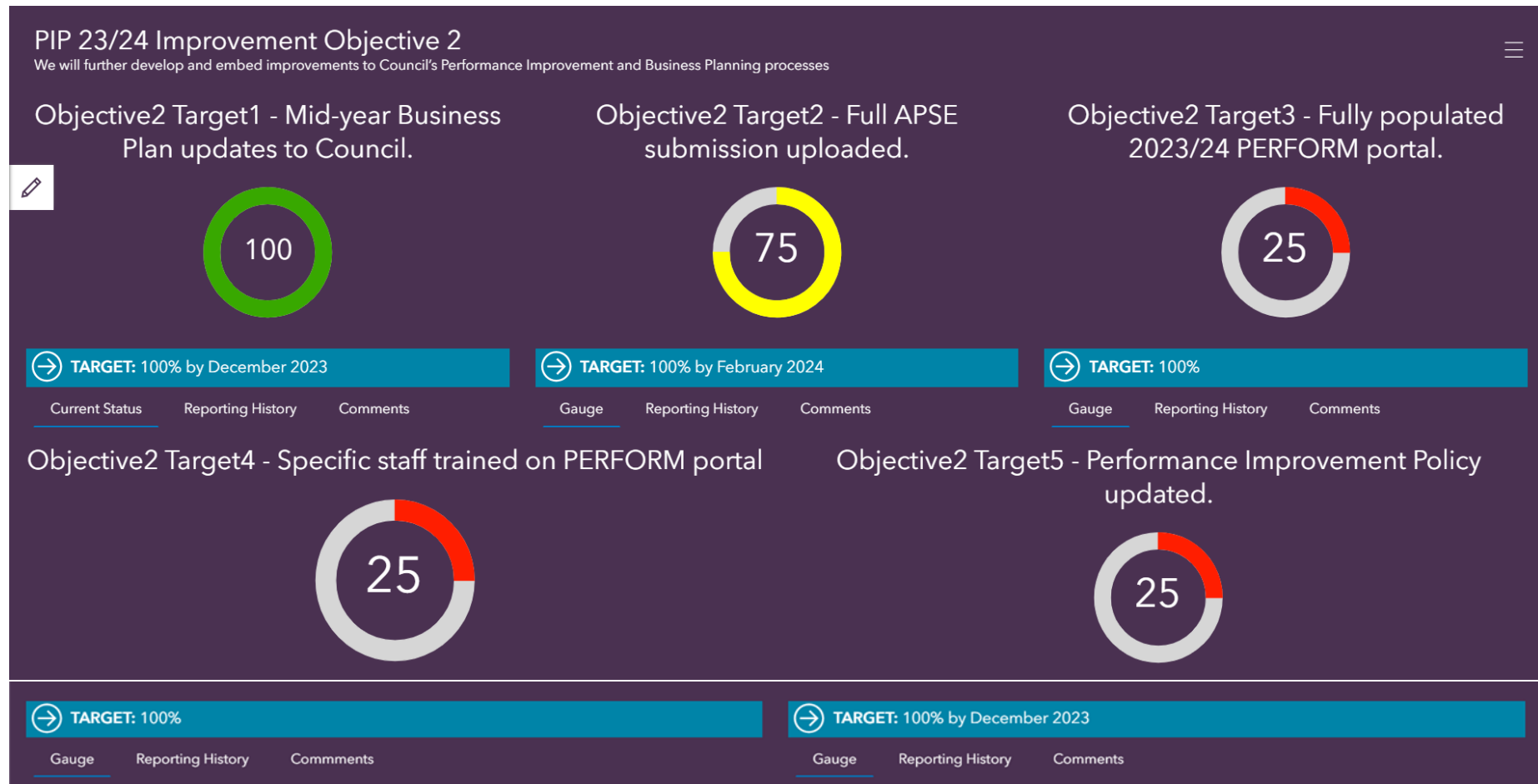
Budget

Is there a specific budget in place for this work, and if so, how is that being managed?

Resource time is agreed as part of Performance Improvement Officer's workplan.

Budget agreed across Council for membership of APSE and the national benchmarking network.

(note that all PERFORM dashboards reflect performance against annual targets)



2023/24 Performance Improvement Objective 3

We will improve our processing of planning applications by streamlining the application process

Mid-year update November 2023

Outputs

Discussions held with senior officers in relation to team performance. Minors Team working to reduce number of older applications in the system in quarter 1 and balance with processing new applications received. Single Rural Dwellings Team high caseload to be reduced and vacant post filled. DEA teams to work to reduce older applications on the system over 12 months with a focus on Q1 and Q2 to issue as many older applications as possible. Meeting to be held 06 November to discuss progress and identify constraints on issuing over 12 month applications. Action plan to be developed following meeting.

Standing Advice is being developed with NI Water and Dept for Communities with the aim to reduce the number of statutory planning consultations required on planning applications. This will assist in streamlining the consultation process and reduce the timeframes for the processing of planning applications. These Standing Advice are at an advanced stage and with the relevant consultees for finalising.

Work has also progressed to advanced stage on review of Pre-Application Discussions. This work has been undertaken in collaboration with RTPI and RSUA Members who submit applications in this Borough. The final procedures are being trialled at present with aim to bring to Planning Committee in January for final agreement and implementation.

Outcomes

Q1 outcomes have been achieved for Local applications and unvalidated management statistics indicate that the outcome for Q2 will also be met.

Major application outcome was not met at end of Q1 due to only 1 application processed to decision (within target) and 1 application withdrawn (over 12 month application). Unvalidated management statistics indicate that the outcome at the end of Q2 will be met and therefore on target for meeting this outcome for end of year.

Unvalidated management statistics indicate that the number of live enforcement cases have increased over the first 6 months. However, the number of cases closed has increased over this 6 month period with focus continuing to increase the number of cases closed over this business year to reduce live cases. However, a number of cases are awaiting appeals to issuing of Enforcement Notice and court hearings, the timing of which is outside the control of the Planning Department.

The outcome to reduce the number of applications in the system over 12 months has not been met at end of Q2 with the number continuing to increase. Issues impacting on the processing of applications includes ongoing delays in responses from statutory consultees, outside of the control of the Planning Department. A meeting is being held on 06 November with Senior Officers within the Development Management Section to discuss issues impacting the progression of these over 12 month applications

Risks

What risks have been identified, and if required, what mitigations have been put in place?

Staff sickness and vacant posts in Q1 and Q2 have had a negative impact on staff workload. Staff sickness remains a risk over the current business year. Lack of recruitment of agency staff to fill temporary vacant posts due to lack of experience resulted in delay to filling posts. Move to Tier 2 recruitment and internal acting-up resulted in posts being filled in Q2. Further discussions have taken place with ODHR in relation to interchange opportunities for filling posts at senior and principal officer level.

Delay from statutory consultees in finalising the Standing Advice was raised at the Planning Statutory Consultees Forum on 13 October 2023. Delays in responses to statutory consultations was also raised at this meeting. Progress on delivering timely decisions is constrained by the delay in responses from statutory consultees on planning applications. Protracted negotiation to resolve issues of concern and await submission of outstanding information/amendments further impacts on the issuing of timely decisions. Workshop to be held with all 40 Members in January to discuss streamlining of the planning application process.

Service Level Delivery

What are the ongoing arrangements for delivery of this Improvement Objective?

Progress is monitored on a monthly basis by the senior officers in each of the teams and by the Development Management and Enforcement Manager. Monthly meetings are held within each of the teams to discuss applications to ensure they are progressed in a timely fashion. Meetings with the Head of Planning, Development Management and Enforcement Manager and Senior Officers are held on a fortnightly basis with performance discussed as part of this meeting.

Who is involved in this work and what are the ongoing staffing and time resources?

All development management and enforcement staff are involved in this work with input from the Business Support Team. The processing of planning applications and enforcement cases is the key duty of Planning Assistants and Planning Officers with management from senior officers. Head of Planning is the key point of contact in relation to the Standing Advice and driving forward strategic improvements.

Reporting

How often is progress reported to senior Service staff and SLT?

Quarterly Reports to Planning Committee and Corporate Policy and Resources Committee

What plans are in place for ongoing reporting?

Continued quarterly reporting as above

Budget

Is there a specific budget in place for this work, and if so, how is that being managed?

No specific budget

(note that all PERFORM dashboards reflect performance against annual targets)



2023/24 Performance Improvement Objective 4

We will improve the provision of our front-line Operations and Estates Services through the recruitment of staff to our permanent staffing structure

Mid-Year Update November 2023

Outcomes and Outputs

How is Council performing in relation to the planned outcomes and outputs for this Improvement Objective?

A significant amount of work for this Objective has been taking place over the past 6 months. As this substantial recruitment and selection process continues, Council is delivering well against the planned outcomes and outputs.

In Operations we had an annual target to move 71 agency General Operatives roles across to permanent positions. To date we have made 50 permanent job offers

In Estates we had an annual target to move 27 agency roles across to permanent positions. To date we have made 21 appointments

In terms of performance against staffing budgets, both Agency and Permanent, Council is performing well and delivering Services within budget.

Risks

What risks have been identified, and if required, what mitigations have been put in place?

The main risk associated is the pace of recruitment. This is affected by the significant levels of recruitment taking place across Council and the consequent pressures on our HR teams to carry out this role. The pace is also affected by the important and ongoing collaboration and negotiations with workers Unions.

Work has been on-going preparing for recruiting new staff while issues with moving existing staff are addressed.

Service Level Delivery

What are the ongoing arrangements for delivery of this Improvement Objective?
Who is involved in this work and what are the ongoing staffing and time resources?
Please attach any agreed work plans or project documents for this Objective?

Work is ongoing between Estates and Operations management and HR to move permanent staff across from legacy job roles to new CCG jobs with associated new T&Cs. On completion, HR related work will then continue to fill remaining vacant posts.

Reporting

How often is progress reported to senior Service staff and SLT?
What plans are in place for ongoing reporting?

Regular reporting within Environmental Service and with SLT. Furthermore, reported update on this Improvement Objective has been reported to Council's CPR Committee in September and November 2023 as part of the mid-year update on progress against the 2022/23 and 2023/24 Performance Improvement Objectives.

Reported update on this Improvement Objective will be reported to Environmental Committee as part of the Service's mid-year Business Plan update in Nov/Dec 2023.

Budget

Is there a specific budget in place for this work, and if so, how is that being managed?

The budgetary requirements here are being met through staffing resource and time in HR and Environmental Services Directorates. This project has been committed to and will be delivered.

(note that all PERFORM dashboards reflect performance against annual targets)



2023/24 Performance Improvement Objective 5

We will improve and increase our level of citizens engagement ahead of a new Corporate Strategy in 2025

Mid-Year Update – November 2023

Outcomes and Outputs

How is Council performing in relation to the planned outcomes and outputs for this Improvement Objective?

Progress against this Objective is currently on time and meeting the milestones.

Timetable of project stages has been agreed and work is well under way.

First Corporate Strategy session has taken place and more are planned.

Council has completed early engagement and planning sessions with Survey Consultants.

Risks

What risks have been identified, and if required, what mitigations have been put in place?

Initially there was a risk around ensuring a session with elected members in advance of the survey being agreed, but we have now planned a session on 30th November and

Service Level Delivery

What are the ongoing arrangements for delivery of this Improvement Objective?

Who is involved in this work and what are the ongoing staffing and time resources?

Please attach any agreed work plans or project documents for this Objective?

Council has engaged with APSE Solutions to work on the project plan and agree responsibilities.

Performance Officer responsible for leading on Council's responsibilities. Reporting to weekly management meeting with Head of Performance and Chief Executive.

Reporting

How often is progress reported to senior Service staff and SLT?
 What plans are in place for ongoing reporting?

Performance Officer responsible for leading on Council's responsibilities. Reporting to weekly management meeting with Head of Performance and Chief Executive and then at the November CPR Committee session as part of the overall Performance Improvement Plan 2023/24 mid-year update

Work Plan attached that has agreed timescales for delivery.

Budget

Is there a specific budget in place for this work, and if so, how is that being managed?

Agreed budget of £9,000, coming centrally from Performance and Chief Exec Service budgets.

Plans are currently under budget.

PIO 5 Work Plan

Project Stage	Scope	Performance Team Actions	Consultant Actions	Output
1. Officer Workshop Session Early November 2023	Determine: Learning from previous survey Review and agree scope Review and agree methodology	Engage with consultants. Identify relevant officers. Arrange virtual session	Write background paper and presentation to inform discussion.	Agreement over principles, scope and methodology

2. Creation of draft Survey	Further feedback from officers Amendments and further feedback as appropriate	Ensure timely feedback on drafts	Prepare and develop survey	Survey at a stage that is suitable to be shared with elected members
3. Elected Members engagement on survey and Corporate Strategy 30 th Nov 2023	Receive elected member feedback Further amendments made as required	Arrange session and identify lead elected members	Prepare presentation and contribute to virtual session with members	Establish Members support and increases relevance
4. Conduct Survey January 2024	Finalise survey and leaflet/letter for distribution – QR code and or paper version Distribute – post, email, social media If required, paper and phone surveys	Arrange for printing as required and distribution of survey and/or leaflet by agreed mechanisms, i.e. post/email to agreed sample Arrange reminders and publicity as appropriate	Finalise survey and all arrangements for distribution	Survey access leaflet distributed Paper copies sent on request Telephone completions as required Completed paper surveys received back and inputted
5. Public Meetings January/February 2024	Receive more, additional and in-depth localised information.	Arrange sessions, logistics, bookings, promotion etc One in each of Coleraine, Limavady, Ballycastle and Ballymoney	Prepare for sessions and facilitate conversations	More information received and survey results enhanced.
Reporting CPR Committee March 2024	Survey results analysis and report	Lead at committee Committee report	Analyse data, write report. Prepare presentation if required	Results received, analysed, and reported on

(note that all PERFORM dashboards reflect performance against annual targets)

